

THE
LEGACY

OF A
DYING MOTHER

To Her

Mourning CHILDREN,

Being the

EXPERIENCES

OF

Mrs. *Susanna Bell,*

Who Died MARCH 13. 1672



With an
EPISTLE DEDICATORY
BY
THOMAS BROOKS Minister of the
Gospel.

LONDON,

Printed and are to be sold by John Hancock
Senior and Junior at the three Bibles in
Popes-Head Alley in Cornhill. 1673.

3108:02



To his Honoured Friends,

Mr. T.B. I.B. S.B. I T. Merchants, and to their Wives, and to the rest of the Children of Mrs. Susanna Bell deceased; The Author wisheth all Grace, Mercy and Peace.

Honoured Friends,



Y Design in this Epistle is not to Complement you, but to benefit you; 'tis not to tickle your ears, but to better your hearts; nor 'tis not to blazon her name or fame to the World, whose Heaven-born-soul is now at rest with God, and who is swallowed up in those transcendent Enjoyments of that other World, which are above the comprehensions of my minde, and the Expressions and Praises of my Pen; but 'tis to allure and draw you to a imitation of what was praiseworthy

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in her. Shall I hint at a few things?

First, imitate her in that sincerity and plain-heartedness which was transpiring in her. Sincerity is not a single grace, but the Source of all graces, and the Interlineary that must run through every grace, for what is faith if it be not unfeigned? and what is love if it be not without dissimulation? and what is Repentance if it be not in truth? Sincerity is the soul of all grace, 'tis the grace of all our graces; what advantage is it to have the *breast-Plate of Righteousness, the Shield*

Eph. 6. of Faith, the *Helmet of Hope*, if they be
13, 14, but painted things; it is the *Girdle of Sin-*
15, 16, 17 *cerity* that makes all the other parts of our
7 *Armour* useful; Was she not a true *Na-*

Job 1.4 *thaniel*, a Person in whom there was no
guile, I mean, no allowed hypocrisy; and was not this that which carried her through the pangs of death with a great

Isa. 38.3, deal of comfort, as it had done *Hezekiah,*
2. *Paul*, and other Saints before. A sincere

2Cor. 1. Christian is like the Violet which grows
12. low, and hides it self and its own sweetness, as much as may be, with its own leaves: Or like *Brutus* staffe, gold within and thorn without: Or like the Ark, gold within and Goats-hair without. The very Heathen loved a candid and sincere spirit:

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spirit; as he that wished, *That there was a Glass-window in his breast, that all the World might see what was in his heart.*

Secondly, imitate her in that Humility, which was a grace she was cloathed withal: I ever found her low and little in her own eyes; much in debasing her self upon all occasions, looking upon her self as below the least of mercies *Gen. 32.* with Jacob, and as dust and ashes, with *10.* Abraham; and as a poor worm, with *Da- Gen. 18.* vid; and less then the least of all Saints, *27.* with Paul. And commonly, the more high *Pf. 22. 6.* in spiritual worth, the more humble in *Eph. 3. 8* heart; God delights to pour in grace into humble souls, as men pour in liquor into empty vessels. Humility makes a Person *Peaceable among Brethren, fruitfull in well-doing, cheerful in suffering, and constant in holy walking.* Humility makes a man precious in the eyes of God; who is little in his own account is always great in Gods esteem. It is well observed by some, That those brave creatures the Eagle and the Lion were not offered in sacrifice unto God; but the poor Lambs and Doves were;

Mat. 18.
10.

to note, that God regards not your brave, high, lofty spirits ; but poor, meek and contemptible spirits. Humility is a rare grace. Many (saith *Augustine*) can more easily give all they have to the poor, then themselves become poor in spirit ; be low in your own eyes, and be content to be low in the eyes of others ; and think not of your selves above what is meet, as ever you would write after your Mothers Copy ; and affect more to be amongst Gods little ones, then the great ones of this world. Be humble Christians, as ever you would be holy be humble ; Humility is of the essence of the new creature : He is not a Christian that is not humble. The more grace the more humble ; those that have been most high in spiritual worth, have always been most humble in heart. *Ignatius* could say of himself, *Non sum dignus dici minimus*, I am not worthy to be called the least. Lord, I am Hell, but thou art Heaven, said blessed *Hooper* ; I am a most hypocritical wretch, not worthy that the earth should bare me, said holy *Bradford*. I have no other name, saith *Luther* then *Sinner* ; *Sinner* is my name, *Sinner* is my fir-name : This is the name by which I shall be always known ; I have sinned, I do sin, I shall sin *in finitum*,
R^{ub}

Ruth was the Daughter of the King of *Moab*, if we may give credit to the general opinion of the *Rabbines*, or if that be not so probable, yet she was one that we may well suppose to have been one of good quality in her own countrey, as being Wife of *Mahlon*, the elder brother of the Family of the Prince *Naasson*, yet she accounts her self scarce equal to one of the Maid-servants in the house of *Boaz*. *Ruth* 2. 13.
 So *Abigail* the wit of the time, 1 *Sam.* 25. 41. So *Elizabeth*, though she was the elder and the better woman for outward quality, yet how confounded was she with *Mary*'s visit, as being too great a weight of honour for her to bear. So *Mary*, *Luke* 1. 38. If I were asked, said *Austin*, what is the readiest way to attain true happiness, I would answer, the first, the second, the third thing is Humility. Humility doth not only entitle to happiness, but to the highest degree of happiness. *Mat.* 18. 4. Humility is that *Jacobs* Ladder which reaches from Earth to Heaven.

Thirdly, imitate her in her charity and mercy towards suffering, needy, and wanting ones; how seldom did you find her ear or hand shut against charitable motions; she knew that those that did good to the

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poor and needy for Christs-sake, God would do good to them for the Poors sake, most sure for his Sons sake. She knew, that he who promised *They should have that asked*, had first commanded such to give unto them that asked; she knew that unmercifulness is a sin which least becomes, and worse befits one that had so largely tasted of the mercies of God, as she had done both in New and Old *England*. She was much made up of pity and mercy to the poor, the bellies of the hungry, and the back of the naked, did often proclaim her pity and charity. Many Ministers, Widows and fatherless ones, have tasted, not only of her husbands bounty, but of hers also. Vain persons when they give, they will cause their kindness to run in a visible channel, they will sound a Trumpet to be seen of men: but was she not a secret and hidden Reliever of Gods distressed ones? Did she not refresh the bowels of many with her hid treasures? Will you all learn to write after this Copy? Of *Midus* it is Fabled, *That whatever he touched he turned into Gold*; 'tis most sure, *That whatever the Hand of Charity toucheth, it turneth it into Gold*, be

M. it. 6.
1, 2.

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it but a Cup of cold water, nay, in-
to Heaven it self; cold water ha-
ving not fuel to heat it, cold water
which costs not the charge of fire to
warm it. *Salvian* saith, that Christ
is *Mendicorum maximus*, the greatest
Beggar in the world, as one that
shareth in all his Saints necessities,
and will never forget the charitable
person, the merciful person. *Cicero*
could say, *That to be rich is not to*
possess much but to use much; And
Seneca could rebuke them that so stu-
died to increase their wealth, that they
forgot to use it. I have read of one
Enagrius a rich man, that lying up-
on his Death-bed, being importuned by
Synesius a pious Bishop, to give som-
thing to charitable uses, he yielded at
last to give three hundred Pounds,
but first took Bond of the Bishop that
it should be repayed him in another
world before he had been one day
dead. He is said to have appeared to
the Bishop, delivering in the Bond can-
celled, as thereby acknowledging what
was promised was made good, ac-
cording to that promise, *Matth. 19.*
29 And every one that hath forsaken
houses, &c.

Mat. 10.

42.

Heb. 6.10

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, imitate her in keeping off from the sins and pollutions of the day wherein you live; was she not

Ezek. 9. 4, 6. Jer. 9. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8 Psal. 119. 53. 136. 158. one of Gods mourning ones for the abominations of the time? did not mens abomination in worship and practice vex, grieve, and wound her

poor soul? was it not her great work to live by no Rule, to walk by no Rule, to worship God by no Rule, but by that which she dared to die by, and to stand by in the great day of our Lord Jesus? she knew, that worshipping of God in spirit and in truth was the great worship, the only worship that God stood upon. She did not, she durst not worship God according to the Customes of the World, or the Traditions of the Elders, or the Examples of great men; she knew that that Worship that is not according to the Word, is 1. Worshipping of devils and not God. Those that depart from the true Worship of God, and set upon false

worship forbidden by God, do not serve God by it but the devil, what boasting soever they make, as you may evidently see, by comparing the Scriptures in the

John 4. 23, 24. Phil 3. 3, 2.

Rev. 9. 20. 2 Chron. 11. 15. Amos 5. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 10. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 1. Ezek. 8. 3.

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the Margent together. She knew 2. That that worship that is not according to the Word is an Image of Idolatry, which of all sins is most provoking to a holy, jealous God. *The Devil, saith Synesius, is as glad to be worshipped in an Idol, as he was by Israel in a Calf,* there being nothing that provokes God to destroy poor sinners more then this. The learned Jews have a saying, *That no punishment ever happened to them in which there was not an ounce of the golden Calf;* grounding it on *Exod. 32. 34. Nevertheless, I will remember to visit this sin upon them.* The Egyptians worshipped a pide Bull, and whereas some thought it strange, that when one died they should have another of the same colour. *Austin* thinks, that the devil, to keep them in idolatry, might do with their Cowes, as *Jacob* did with the Ewes, present to them when they conceived the likeness of such a Bull. Certainly Satan will use all the Art he can to keep poor sinners in ways of false worship, it being the most compendious way that can be to engage God to destroy them. She knew 3. That that worship that is not according to the Word, hath destroyed the most flourishing Churches and Nations, witness the Church and Nation

See *Hos.* 8.5,6.7. *Rev.* 9. 20 *Ezek.* 10.2. *2 Chron.* 7.20. *Weems* *Christ.* *Synag.*

tion of the Jews, the seven Churches of *Asia*, and the whole Eastern parts of the Empire. She knew 4. That that worship that is not according to the Word is a cursed worship. It is the observation of one well skill'd in the Jewish Learning, that there is only one verse in the Prophecy of the Prophet *Jeremy*, which is written in the *Chaldee* tongue, all the rest being in *Hebrew*, and that is *Jer.* 10.11. *So shalt thou say, Cursed be the gods who made neither Heaven nor Earth; and this so done by the Holy Ghost on purpose, that the Jews when they were in captivity, and solicited by the Chaldeans to worship false gods, might be able to answer them in their own language, Cursed be your gods, we will not worship them, for they made neither Heaven nor Earth; That God that made Heaven and Earth, is only to be worshipped according to his own Word; for he will own no worship but what he will accept of, no worship but that; he will bless no worship but that, nor he will reward no worship but that; Your glorified Mother kept close to instituted worship when she had health and strength; in this it will be your wisdom to write after her fair Copy. But*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, imitate her in justifying of the Lord under the sharpest, bitterest, and most afflictive Providences and dispensations; how often have I heard her to justify the Lord, even whilst he has been a writing bitter things against her; when Gall and Wormwood hath been put into her Cup, hath she not said with *Ezra*, *Ezra 9.* *God hath punished us less then our iniquities deserve;* and with *Nehemiah*, *Neh 9.* *be it, thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly;* and with *Job*, *Job 1.21* *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes, and blessed be the Name of the Lord.* And with *Daniel*, *The Lord our God is righteous Dan. 9.* *in all his works which he doth.* You know what afflictive Providences she has been under, both in respect of her person, and in the loss of her husband, and in those variety of weaknesses that attended her body, and in the great losses that some of you have met with in this world: Besides several other exercises; yet how has she commonly been taken up in blessing of God, and in justifying of God, and also in admiring the goodnesse of God, that it has been no worse with her,

and

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and here I am satisfied she would not have exchanged her gains by afflictions for all the gains of this world. Stars shine brightest in the darkest night; Torches are better for the beating; Grapes come not to the proof till they come to the Press. Spices smell sweetest when pounded: Young Trees root the faster for shaking; Vines are the better for bleeding: Gold looks the brighter for scouring: Glow-wormes glister best in the dark: Juniper smells sweetest in the fire: Pomander becomes most fragrant for chafing: The Palm-tree proves the better for pressing. Camomil, the more you tread it, the more you spread it: such is the condition of all Gods children, they are the most triumphant when most distressed; most glorious when most afflicted, as their conflicts so their conquests, as their tribulations so their triumphs. Gods people are true *Salamanders*, that live best in the Furnace of afflictions, so that heavy afflictions are the best Benefactors to heavenly affections: when afflictions hang heaviest, then corruptions hangs loosest. And grace that is hid in Nature, as sweet-water in Rose-leaves, is then most fragrant when the fire of affliction is put under to distil it out. But

Sixthly.

Sixthly, imitate her in the standing, bent and course of her life and conversation. No man is to judge of the soundness or sincerity of his spirit by some particular acts, but by the constant frame and bent of his spirit, and by his general conversation in this world; if particular actions might determine whether a man had grace or no grace, whether he were in Christ or not in Christ, whether he were a Saint or no Saint, whether he were sincere or unsound, we should many times conclude, that those have no grace who indeed have, and that they were not in Christ who indeed are, and that they are no Saints who indeed are; and that they are not sincere, who certainly are true *Nathaniels*: the best Saints on this side Heaven have had their extravagant motions, and have very foully and sadly miscarried as to particular actions, (even then when the constant course and bent of their spirits, and main of their conversations have been Godwards, and Christ-wards, and Holiness-wards, and Heaven-wards, &c.) witness *David's* Murther and Adultery, *Noah's* Drunkenness, *Lot's* Incest, *Joseph's* swearing, *Job's* cursing, *Jonah's* vexing, *Peter's* denying, and *Thomas* his not believing.

ing; such twinklings do and will accompany the highest and fairest stars. As he that foots it best may be sometimes found all along, and the neatest person may sometimes slip into a slough. He that cannot endure to see a spot upon his clothes, may yet sometimes fall into a Quagmire. So the holiest and exactest Christians may sometimes be surprized with many infirmities and unevennesses, and sad miscarriages. Certainly, particular sinings are compatible with a gracious frame, though none are with a glorified condition. Our best estate on earth is mixt, and not absolute. Glory annihilates all sinful practices, but grace only weakens them. The most sincere Christian is but an imperfect Christian, and hath daily cause to mourn over his infirmities, as well as he has cause to bless God for his graces and mercies. Look as every particular stain doth not blemish the universal fineness of the Cloth. So neither doth this or that particular Fact disprove and deny the general bent of a persons heart or life. Particulars may not decide the estate either way; 'tis true, a man by a particular sinning is denominated guilty, but by no one particular can a mans estate be challenged either to be
good

good or bad. He that shall judge of a Christians estate, by particular acts, though very bad, will certainly condemn the Generation of the Righteous; we must always distinguish betwixt some single good actions, and a series of good actions; its not this or that particular good action, but a continued course of holy actions that denominates a person holy. Certainly, as there is no man so holy, but sometimes he falls into this or that particular sin; so there is no man so wicked, but he falls in with this or that particular duty: as you may see in *Pharaoh, Balaam, Saul, the Ninevites, Felix, Herod, Judas*, yea, and the very Scribes and Pharisees. Now look as every sin which a godly man falls into (through infirmity) doth not presently denominate him ungodly, so neither will a few good actions done by a wicked man prove him godly. Tis what the course and tenour of the life is, that must be most diligently and wisely observed; for every man is as his course is; if his course be holy, the man is so; if his course be wicked, the man is so. There is a Maxim in Logick, viz. *That no general Rule can be established upon a particular instance*; and there is another Maxime in Logick, viz. *That no particular instance can overthrow*

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a General Rule. We are never to make a judgement of our estates and conditions by some particular actions, whether they are good or evil; but we are still to make a judgement of our estates and conditions by the general frame, bent and disposition of our hearts, and by the continuance of our lives. Now I dare appeal to you and all others, that have observed the constant tenour of her life and conversation, whether it has not been such as becomes the Gospel, and as hath adorned the Doctrine of God our Saviour (human infirmities excepted). And O that this might be the mercy of all her children, to walk with God as she hath done, and then I should not doubt but that they would all meet in Heaven at last. But

Seventhly, imitate her in her love to the Saints, to all the Saints, in whom she could discern *aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ. Did she not love, delight and take pleasure to see the graces of the holy Spirit sparkling and shining in the hearts, lives and lips of the Saints, secretly wishing in her self that her soul were but in so noble a case. Were there any men in all the world, that were so precious, so lovely, so comely, so excellent, and so honourable in her account, in her eye, as

those

Phil. 1.

27.

Tit. 2. 10

Gen. 6. 9.

1 John 3.

10. 14.

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those that had the Image of God, of Christ, of grace, of holiness, most clearly, most fairly, and most fully stamped upon them. Did she not love Saints as Saints? Was it not the Image of God that drew out her affection to the people of God? Many, like the *Bohemian Cur*, can fawn upon a good suit, but grace was lovely in her eye, though cloath'd with Rags. Many love godly men as they are Politicians, or potent, or learned, or of a sweet nature, or affable, or related, or as they have been kind to them; but all this is but natural love; but to love them because they are spiritually lovely, because of the seed of God in them, because they are all glorious within, is to love them as becometh Saints; it is to love them at a higher and nobler rate than any hypocrite in the world can reach to. Did she not set the highest price, and the greatest value and esteem upon those that were gracious? had she not an honour in her heart for them that feared the Lord? Did she not value persons according to their worth for another world, and not according to their worldly Greatness or Grandeur? Did she not prefer a holy Job upon the dunghill,

17
P/.15.1.
4.
P/.16.3.
1 John 5.1

1 Joh 3.9,
P/.43.13

Pro.12.
26.
before Pro.28.
6.

Luke 16. before a wicked *Abab* upon the Throne? did she not set a higher price upon a gracious *Lazarus*, though cloathed with Rags and full of sores, then upon a rich and wretched *Dives*, though he were cloathed gloriously, and fared sumptuously every day? was not her love to the Saints universal? to one Christian as well as another, to all as well as any, to poor *Lazarus* as well as to rich *Abraham*, to a despised *Job* as well as to an admired *David*, to an afflicted *Joseph* as well as to a raised *Jacob*, to a despised disciple as well as to an exalted Apostle? did she not love to see the Image and Picture of her heavenly Father, though hung in never so poor a frame, and in never so mean a cottage; without peradventure, he that loves one Saint for the Image of God that is stampe upon him, he cannot but fall in love with every Saint that bears the lovely Image of the Father upon him. And O that this might be all your mercy to write after this Copy that she has set before you. But

Eightly, imitate her in her constancy in the ways of God, with a notwithstanding all the hazards, stormes, dangers and troubles that has attended these ways, especially in these latter days of Apostacy, wherein God had cast her lot. She was

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not a Reed shaken with every wind; The
 was unchangeable in changeable times;
 whatever stormes beat upon the ways of
 God, or the people of God, she remain-
 ed fixt, firm and immoveable in the ways
 of the Lord; and doubtless such souls as
 are truly good, they will be good in the
 worst of times, and in the worst of places,
 and amongst the worst of persons; Prin-
 ciples of grace and holiness, they are last-
 ing, yea, everlasting; they are not like
 the Morning-cloud, nor the early dew.
 Let times, and places, and persons be what
 they will, a sincere Christian will not dis-
 honour his God, nor change his Master,
 nor quit his ways, nor blemish his Pro-
 fession, nor wound his conscience to sleep
 in a whole skin, or to preserve his safety,
 or to secure his liberty; and was it not
 thus with her in the most trying times?
 An upright man is a right man. So *Ju-
 dashar* is rendred by the Septuagint, *Judg.*
17.6. He is one that won't be bowed or
 bent by the sinful customes or examples of
 the times and places where he lives. Let
 the times be never so dangerous, licen-
 tious, superstitious, idolatrous and erro-
 neous, yet a sincere plain-hearted Chri-
 stian will keep his ground, and hold on
 in his way, as might be made evident by

Psal. 44.

Psf 119.

112.

1 John 3.

9.

Hos. 6.4.

Gen. 6.9,

Rev. 14.

4. Rev. 3.

4. Job 17.

9.

Heb. 12.

1.

Ps 125.

1, 2.

a cloud of witnesses. The Lawrel keeps its freshness and greenness in the Winter-season; a sincere Christian is *semper eodem*; let the wind, and the world, and the times turn which way they will, a sincere soul for the main will still be the same. He will be like Mount Sion which cannot be removed; he will stand his ground and hold his own under all changes; he is like the Philosophers good man (*Tetra-gons*) four-square, cast him where you will, like a Dye he falls always square and sure; so cast a plain-hearted Christian where you will into what company you will, and into what condition you will, yet still he will fall sure and square for God and godliness; let the times be never so sad, nor never so bad, yet a plain-hearted Christian will still keep close to God and his ways, and will rather let all go then let his God go, or his Religion go, or his Integrity go, or Ordinances go. *Lapidaries* tell us of the *Chelydorian* Stone, that it will retain its virtue and lustre no longer then it is enclosed in Gold; a fit Emblem of an unsound heart, who is only good while he is enclosed in golden prosperity, safety and felicity. An unsound Christian, like green Timber, shrinks when the Sun of Persecution shines

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shines hot upon him; the heat of fiery trials cools the courage of unsound Christians; but a sincere plain-hearted Christian is like a massie vessel of Gold, that keeps its own shape and figure at all times, in all places, and in all companies: when one of the Ancient Martyrs was greatly threatned by his Persecutors, he replied, *There is nothing* (saith he) *of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my Profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, come on't what will, in these evil days wherein multitudes have turned aside into crooked paths.* She kept close and constant to the ways of the Lord, so long as her natural strength lasted. And O that all you her children would make it your business in this as well as in other things to write after your Mothers Copy; remembering, that if you are not faithful unto death, you shall never receive a Crown of life; *Rev. 2. 10.* And that if you do not continue to the end (that is, in well-doing) you shall never be saved, *Math. 24. 13.* But

Ninthly, Imitate her in her high valuations of Jesus Christ, what low and little things

Phil. 3. 8, things were her own graces, duties, services and mercies, when she cast her eye
 9, 10. upon Christ, when she fell into discourses
Mat. 13. of Christ. Christ was her (*Summum bonum*) chiefest good. What was all the
 44. world to a sight of Christ, to a day, yea, to an hours communion with Christ. They are no believers that don't value
1 Pet. 2. 7 Jesus Christ above all the world, and all things in the world; for unto every one that believes he is precious; most precious, only precious, and for ever precious. They value him 1. Above their lusts, *Gal.* 5. 24. They can pluck out right eyes for Christ, and cut off right hands for Christ. 2. They value him above the world. Witness *David*, *Psal.* 73. 25. and *Daniel*, *Dan.* 6. and the disciples, *Matth.* 19. 27. and *Moses*, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. and the primitive Christians and the Martyrs of a later date 3. They value him above their lives, *Rev.* 12. 11. They loved not their lives unto the death. So *Paul*, *Acts* 20. 22, 23, 24. *Acts* 21. 13. So the Martyrs. 4. They value him above all their Relations: If all the World were a lump of Gold (said the Dutch Martyr) and in my hands to dispose of, I would give it to live all my days with my Wife and Children in a Prison, but Christ and his

his Truth is dearer to me then all. You have thousands of such instances upon record, 5. They value him above their goods, *Heb. 10. 34* *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your Goods.* So has many thousands since under sharp persecutions. 6 They value him above all natural, spiritual and acquired excellencies, *Phil 3. 7, 8.* In all my serious Discourses with her about our Lord Jesus Christ, she would still set the Crown upon Christs head. She would lay her self low, very low, that he alone might be exalted. The thoughts of Christ was precious to her, the Discourses of Christ were precious to her, the Image of Christ was precious to her, the Ordinances of Christ were precious to her, the Discoveries of Christ were precious to her, the day of Christ was precious to her, the Offices of Christ were precious to her, and the Rebukes of Christ (whilst she enjoyed his Presence under them) was precious to her; but above all, the Person of Christ was most precious to her; In her eye he was the chiefest of ranthons. *Cant. 5. 10* *Psalm.* fairer then the children of men, and all the riches, honours, pleasures and delights of this world were but dung in comparison of him. *Phil. 3. 7.* O at what a rate has the 8. Saints of old prized our Lord Jesus.

Maliem

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Mallet (said one) *ruere cum Christo,*
quam regnare cum Cesare, Luther had ra-
 ther fall with Christ then stand with *Cesar*.
 The same Author elsewhere saith, that he
 had rather be (*Christianus Risticus* then
Ethnicus Alexander;) a Christian-Clown
 then a Pagan-Emperour. *Theodosius* the
 Emperour preferred the Title of *Mam-*
brum Ecclesia before that of *Capituli Im-*
perii; professing that he had rather be a
 Saint and no King, then a King and no
 Saint. And godly *Constantine* rejoyced
 more in being the servant of Christ, then
 in being the Emperour of the World.
Bernard saith, That he had rather be in
 his Chimney-Corner with Christ, then in
 Heaven without him. It was an excellent
 Answer of one of the Martyrs when he
 was offered riches and honours if he would
 recant, said, Do but offer me somewhat
 that is better then my Lord Jesus Christ,
 and you shall see what I will say to you. It
 was a sweet Prayer of one, Make thy
 Son dear, very dear, exceeding dear, only
 dear and precious, or not at all. Another
 good man cried out, I had rather have
 one Christ then a thousand worlds. I have
 read of *Johannes Mollius*, That when so-
 ever he spake of the Name of Jesus, his
 eyes dropt tears: And of another Reve-
 rend

gent Divine, who being in a deep muse after some discourse that passed of dear Jesus, and tears trickling down his cheeks before he was aware, and being asked the reason of it, he confessed ingenuously, *It was because he could not draw his dull heart to prize Jesus Christ at that rate he should and fain would.* Christ lay near your Mothers heart, and O that he may lie near all your hearts, that so you may be safe and saved for ever. But

Tenthly, Imitate her in the casting a Mantle of love over the infirmities and weakneses of poor, weak, miscarrying Christians, in the burying of Christians weakneses under their graces; much I know of this, but some know much more. She was not for blazoning of others weakneses, whether they were nearer to her, or more remote from her. She commonly carried a Mantle of love about her to cast over other mens sins; she seemed to live under the Power of that Word, *Pro. 10. 12. Love covereth all sins*; and that *1 Pet. 4. 8. Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.* By covering must be meant, 1. A favourable Construction of all things, which in right reason might well be construed, 2. A passing by smaller infirmities and private offences. 3. Such

3. Such a covering as might cure also, for love is wise. Love hath a large Mantle, and covers all sins, that is all private sins, and all such sins as may be concealed with a good conscience, both towards God and towards men. Again, it must be understood, not of our own transgressions committed against God, but of other mens sins and transgressions committed against us. Love is not suspicious but in-

Pro. 17. 9 interprets all things in the best sense, Love

To observe and take notice of other mens faults, but not of our own, is the easiest thing in the World, said Thales.

will not publish private injuries to the dishonour or shame of the party offending *Prov 12. 16.* A prudent man covereth shame. It is recorded to *Vespasians* honour, That he was more ready to conceal the

vices then the virtues of his friends. Such commonly are best acquainted with other mens infirmities, who are least observant of their own iniquities and irregularities. The nature of man is very apt, saith *Seneca*, (*Videtur perspicillia magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to behold other mens faults, rather then Looking Glasses to behold their own. *Erasmus* speaks of one who collected all the lame and defective verses in *Homers* Works, but

not passed over all that was excellent. The
Donatists of old were more glad to finde
a fault then to see it amended; and to pro-
claim it then to cover it; to carp at it
then to cure it. If I should finde a Bi-
shop committing adultery (saith Constan-
tine the Great) I would cover that foul
Fault with mine Imperial Robe, rather then
it should come abroad to the scandal of the
weak, and the scorn of the wicked. Seneca
unmasking the face of their corrupt State,
hath this notable passage, The News
from Rome take thus, the Walls are ruined,
the Temples are not visited, the Priests are
fled, the Treasuries rob'd, old men are
dead, young men are mad, Vices are Lords
over all: The Dictator blames the Con-
sul, the Consul checks the Censor, the
Censor chides the Prator, the Prator falls
foul upon the Aedile, and he casts all the
fault upon the Quaestor, and because no
man will acknowledge himself in fault we
have no hopes of better times. How
applicable this is to our present times I
shall leave others to judge; but by the
whole you see that all sorts and ranks of
men, are more apt to observe and quarrel
at other mens faults, then with their own.
Observable is that of our blessed Saviour,
Luke 2. 37. There was a woman in the
City

City which was a sinner: No wonder, what woman is not? we may guess both who the woman was, and what the sin was, and which City it was: but he neither names the City, nor the sin, nor the sinner. Seeing her Reformation, he consoles her Reputation. O that you would all labour to write after this Copy; When *Alexander* was painted, the Painter laid his finger on his wart, and *Apelles* covered *Venus* mole with her finger, that it might not be spied. As you stand in a near relation one to another, so I could wish that you would lay your fingers upon one anothers warts and moles, and not blazon one anothers humane frailties and infirmities to the world, but love and live as brethren and sisters, who are never without a mantle of love to cover infirmities, I say, not enormities: to cover weaknesses, I say, not wickedness: to cover from the world, I say, not from God, nor from one another. But

Eleventhly, imitate her in her earnest desires and endeavors, that others, especially that her nearest and dearest Relations might taste that the Lord is gracious, that they might all be holy and happy, gracious and glorious; that they might all have changed hearts, renewed
natures,

natures, and sanctified souls: That they might all be born again, adorned with grace, filled with the spirit, and fitted for Heaven. You know, that upon her dying bed, she desired me, that when she was asleep in Jesus, that I would, for the advantage of the living, especially for your sakes (who lay nearest her heart) preach on that

Psal. 34. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Which accordingly I did, once and again. Now what was her design in this, but that every one of you might share with her in the same favour, love, spirit, grace, merit, righteousness and goodness, that her soul had long tasted of. There is not a soul that ever have had any saving taste of the Lord, and of his goodness, but is mighty desirous that others should taste of the same grace and goodness. O taste and see that the Lord is good. As if David should have said, I for my part have seen, tasted, and experienced much of God and his goodness, and never more then in my greatest straits.

1 Thes. 4. 14.

The three Sermons that I preached on Psal. 37. 8. I have been desired to Print, but could not answer Friends expectations in that, because I had not the Notes by me, of what I said upon that Text.

I am loth to eat these heavenly viands, and
soul-ravishing morsels of contentment

*Pf. 66. 16. the words
are without a Copula-
tive in the Hebrew,
venite, audite. Calv.
Come, Hearken. Like
that Gen. 19. 14. It
not only imports an In-
vitation, but the affir-
mation also of him that
speaks.*

alone. Come hither all
you that fear God, and I
will tell you what God
hath done for my soul.
Come, O come poor souls,
taste and see with me how
good the Lord is; how
comfortable the abra-
ces of Christ are; and
how sweet communion
with Heaven is. We
cannot advantage others,

more then by declaring and commu-
nicating unto them our soul-secrets,
our soul-Experiments. All the Saints
own it as their duty to glorifie God
in their Generation, and wherein can
they bring more glory to God then in
helping souls to Heaven? and how can
they finde out a readier way to effect this
great business, then by telling them what
God has done for their souls; then by
making a faithful Narrative of their own
conditions, by nature and by grace; when
and how the goodness of the Lord was
made known unto them upon a saving ac-
count. O tell poor wounded sinners what
methods of mercy the Lord used to the
heal-

healing up of your wounds, and to the
 quieting of your consciences; that so they
 may be encouraged to a serious use of all
 Gospel-means, and to a hope of the same
 grace and goodness of the Lord towards
 them. O labour more and more to con- *Heb. 12.*
 vince others by your experiences, that *14.*
 grace is the only way to glory; and that *See my*
without holiness no man shall see the Lord; Treatise
Paul had tasted that the Lord was good, *on this*
 and he wish'd, that both *Agrippa* and all *Text.*
 that heard him were altogether such as he *Acts 26.*
 was, except his bonds. As soon as *Mat-* *29.*
thew had tasted that the Lord was good; *Like 5.*
 he called together an huge multitude of *29.*
 Publicans and others to meet at his house.
 As soon as *Philip* had tasted of the sweet-
 ness of communion with Christ, he runs *John 1.*
 to *Nathaniel* to invite him to Christ, say- *45, 46.*
 ing, *Come and see* No sooner had the
 Woman of *Samarita* tasted of Christs li-
 ving waters, but she leaves her water-pot, *John 4.*
 and posts into the City to call out her *28.*
 friends and neighbours to see and taste
 how good dear *Jelus* was. So those
 young Converts, *Zech. 8. 21.* And the
 inhabitants of one City shall go to another, *Vide*
 saying, let us go speedily to pray before the *Pemblem*
 Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts *In loc.*
 will go also. *Mic. 4. 2.* And many Na- *Isa. 2. 2,*
 tions *3, 4.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

sions shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Hierusalem. These blessed Converts would not come alone, but draw others along in company with them to worship the Lord, which is lively expressed in a Mimesis or imitation of the encouragements and invitations they should use one to another, I will go also: every one was as forward for himself, as zealous for another. O blessed frame of spirit! O my friends, it is the nature of true grace to be diffusive and communicative; Grace can't be conceal'd; they that have tasted of divine sweetness cannot chuse but speak of it to others, their hearts like bottles of new wine, would be ready to burst if they had not vent. Grace is like fire in the bones, they that have it cannot hide it. All the faculties of the soul, and all the members of the body, will still be a telling of others, that there is a treasure of grace in the soul. The blind men that were cured were charged to be silent, but they could not hold their peace. So here, Lilmer behav'd, We therefore learn that

The Epistle Dedicatory.

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we may teach, is a Proverb among the Rabbins. And I do therefore lay in and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many. And shall not grace do as much as nature, shall not grace do more then nature? Well friends, this I shall only say, that the frequent counsels that your glorified Mother have given you to taste of divine goodness, and the experiences that she has communicated to you of her taste of divine goodness, both in her health and sickness, both in her living and dying, will certainly either be for you, or else be a dreadful witness against you, in the great day of our Lord Jesus. O remember not only these experiences of hers, that are now presented to your eyes; but those other experiences of hers as to her inward man that has often sounded in your ears. But

Lastly, labour to imitate her in her comfortable passage out of this world. Those words were more worth then a world which she uttered a little before she fell asleep in the Lord, *viz. Lord, take my aching head, and lay it in thy bosom.* How often did she express her longings to be with Christ, that she might sin nor sorrow no more; her outward man was full of pain,

weakness and trouble, yet how was her inward man refresh'd and quieted in a way

In all my visits of her, my hardest task was still to work her into a willingness to stay in this world, till all her doing and her suffering work was over.

of believing, according to that blessed Word, Isa. 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace.* The Hebrew runs שלום שלום *Shalom, Shalom, Peace, Peace : whose mind is*

stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee.

Never did the espoused Maid long more for the Marriage-day, nor the Apprentice for his freedom, nor the Captive for his Ransom, nor the condemned man for his Pardon, nor the Traveller for his Inn, nor the Marriner for his Haven, nor the sick man for his health, nor the wounded man for his cure, nor the hungry man for his bread, nor the naked for clothes, then she did long to die and to be with Christ, which for her was best of all.

*Phil 1.
23.*

*Rev. 22.
20.*

How often were those words in her mouth. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* The face of none is so comely to the Saints eye, the voice of none so lovely to his ears, the taste of none so pleasant in his mouth as Jesus Christ. The Name of Jesus hath a thousand treasures of joy and comfort in it, saith *Chrysostome*, and

is therefore used by Paul five hundred times, as some have reckoned, The Name of a Saviour (saith one) is Honey in the Mouth, Musick in the Ear, and a Jubilee in the heart: And how often was that blessed word in her mouth, Remember, O Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight; a serious sense of her uprightness in the main of her walking with God, did yield her more then a little sweetness and comfort when she was upon her bed of Pain; one of the last speeches of a dying upright Christian was this; Satan may as well pluck God out of Heaven, as pluck my soul out of his keeping. She knew him in whom she had believed, and was perswaded that he was able to keep that which she had committed to him against that day. A child that hath any precious Jewel given him, cannot better secure it, then by putting it into his fathers hands to keep; so neither can we better provide for our souls safety then by committing them to God: Keep that which I have committed: that is, either my precious soul, which I have committed to his care and custody to bring it forth glorious at that day of his appearance.

Bernard

Isa. 38.3

John 10.

2^d, 29,

30.

2 Tim. 2.

12.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

or my eternal life, happiness and crown of glory, which I have as it were deposited wth him by faith and hope; and thus it was with her. The Apostle saith, he committed to Gods Custody a Pawn or Pledge, but about this Pawn or Pledge Interpreters differ; One saith *It is his soul*; Another saith, *It is him self*; And a third saith, *It is his works*: And a fourth saith, *It is his sufferings*: And a fifth saith, *It is his salvation*. In short, he committed to God his soul, himself, his doings, his sufferings, to be rewarded with life and salvation; and so did she who is now at rest in the Lord. Lord (saith *Ansign*) I will die that I may enjoy thee. I will not live, but I will die; I desire to die that I may see Christ, and refuse to live that I may live with Christ. The broken Rings, Contracts and Espousals, contents not the true Lover, but he longs for the Marriage-day, and so did she, who has now exchange'd a sick bed for a Royal Throne, and the company of poor Mortals, for the Presence of God, Christ, Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. It was well said of one, *So far as we tremble at death, so far we want love*; its sad when the Contract is made between Christ and a Christian;

stian; to see a Christian afraid of the making up of the Marriage: But your deceased Relation was no such Christian; I know nothing in this world, that her heart was so much set upon, as the completing of the Marriage between Christ and her soul. My eye is upon that text, *Isa. 57. 1. The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and* ~~righteous~~ *men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* I have read of one *Philo* a Jew, and of another, that when they came to any City or Town, and heard of the death of any godly man, though never so poor, they would both of them mourn exceedingly, because of the great loss that place had by the death of that godly man; and because it was a warning-Piece from God of evil approaching: but ah, how many famous godly Ministers, and how many choice Christians hath the Lord of Hosts taken away from us; and yet who lays it to heart. There is no greater Prognostick of an approaching storm, then Gods calling home so many Worthies (of whom this world was not worthy) as he has lately done. Now O that God would beautifie all your souls with all these 12 Jewels, with which your Master was adorned in life and death.

Sir,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Sir, you having signified to me, that it was your Mothers minde, and your desires, that her following Experiences should be printed. I did think it might be somewhat seasonable to put you all in minde of such things as I had (among many others) observed, and which should be all your ambition to imitate, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, and be happy with her for ever in that other world,

Considering, that these Experiences may fall into other hands besides your own. I thought it meet to let such Readers know, that these were taken from her by one of you, when she was in a very weakly condition, and had little more strength then to speak; and they are but some of those that lay most warm upon her heart at that time. God began to work upon her in the Morning of her days; and had there been a Collection of all her most close, inward, spiritual Experiences, they would have been greatly multiplied beyond what is now presented to the Readers eye; but that was a Task too hard for her under those variety of weakneses that she was every day contending with. The Experiences of old disciples commonly rise high, but the

the Ingenious Reader may easily discern by the twelve Jewels with which she was adorned, that she was a woman both of choice and great Experiences, *Astin* observes on *Psal. 16. 2.* *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul:* 'He doth not call them (saith he) to acquaint them with speculations, how wide the Earth is, and how far the Heavens are stretch'd out, or what the number of the stars are, or what is the course of the Sun; But come and I will tell you the wonders of his grace, the faithfulness of his promises, and the riches of his mercy to my soul. Now all Ministers and Christians that had any inward acquaintance with her soul-concernments, they do very well know, that she was most taken up with the wonders of Gods free, rich, and sovereign grace, and with the sweetness, the fulness, the freeness, the riches and the faithfulness of his Promises, and with the riches of his mercy in Christ to her soul.

To draw to a close, it is observable, that even the holy Apostles in their Canonical Epistles, have spent some good part of their holy lines in the ample Commendations of those eminent Saints to whom

3 Ep. of
John 12.

1 Chro.
31. 20,
21.

to whom they wrote, as Paul in
to Philemon, and John in that of
to an Honourable Lady: and the
other to a meaner person, viz. Gaius
and that they went not behind the
door (as we say) to whisper; but
on the House-top did proclaim the
Religious and pious practices of the
more choice Christians to the imitatio
on of others. And further, when I
consider that which the Apostle speak
eth of, *Demetrius* a rare and
ordinary Testimony; *Demetrius* be
a good report of all men, and of the
Truth it self; and we also bear Re
cord, and we know that our Record
true: And yet further, when I con
sider what is Recorded of *Hezekiah*
Thus did *Hezekiah* throughout all Ju
dah, and wrought what was good, and
right, and true before his God. And
in every work that he began in the
service of the House of God, and
in the Law and Commandments, he
did it with all his heart and pro
pered. And when I consider what
high commendations the Apostle be
stows upon the Churches of *Ma
donia*, 2 Cor. 8. 1. to the eleven

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erfe; And upon the Church of Thes-
alonica, 1 Thessal. 1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9. And also 2 Thessal. 1.
4, 5. And when I consider, that
it was the Holy Ghost who writ 2 Chron.
35. 25. Epitaph, They buried him 24. 16.
in the City of David among the Kings,
because he had done good in Israel,
both towards God and towards his
house. It is said also of Iosiah, in
his Commendations by the same Spi-
rit, Like unto him there was no King, 2 King.
23. 25.
Moses and Miriam, Sarah, Debo-
rah, Esther, Elizabeth and others,
after their deaths have had their due
praises. When I consider of these
things I am very well satisfied in
what I have said concerning this de-
ceased Sister and friend. I do no
ways doubt, but that we may very
safely say good of such, when dead,
whose ordinary course and practice it
was to do good while they lived;
but in this censorious Age, No soon-
er is dust cast upon some Christi-
ans head, but there are those that
will do what they can to throw dirt
in their faces: Augustine doth very
fully compare these to Dives his dog,
ch

they lay licking and sucking Lazarus his sores, but his sounder parts they never meddled with. To trample upon the Reputation, and stain the glory of them that die in the Lord, argues such Persons to be kin to Fleas, who bite most when men are asleep. It was one of Solons Laws, that none should dare to speak evil of the dead. And Plutarch tells us, that that was highly commended and duly observed: But is it so now? This I am sure, that it well becomes Christians not to dare to speak evil (if they could) of those who for the main have lived holily, and died graciously, as this deceased friend hath done. Let this satisfy us, that she is above the Praises and envies of men. 'Tis the good, the profit, the advantage of all your souls, and theirs into whose hands this little Piece may fall, that has drawn me out to write so large an Epistle. If I had had only the dead in my eye, a few lines should have serv'd the turn. I doubt not but that you will kindly accept of my endeavours to be serviceable to your immortal souls, and who can tell what fruit may grow upon this Tree? I shall improve all the interest I have in Heaven, that both the Epistle and your glorified Mothers Experiences may be blest, to the

the furtherance of the internal and eternal welfare of all your souls. The goodwill of him that dwelt in the Bush, rest upon you and yours. So I Rest

Honoured friends,

Your Souls Servant

THO. BROOKS.





A TRUE RELATION OF

*Some of the EXPERIENCES of
Mrs. SUSANNA BELL, taken from
her own Mouth by a near Relation of hers,
a little before her death.*

*Left as a LEGACY to her Mourning
Children.*

IT pleased the Lord to order it so, that in my young days I was cast into a Family that feared the Lord. And going to hear Mr. *White*, preaching from those words, *Prov. 15. 13 But he that is of a merry heart hath a continual Feast.* From these words he did shew, how happy a thing a good conscience was, and what a sad thing it was with *Judas* to have a bad conscience; and what a blessed thing it was to have a good conscience. From that

of Hezekiah, Isa. 38. 3. And he said, Remember, now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. This Sermon God made useful to me; and after this, it pleased the Lord to order it so, that I changed my condition, and the Lord provided for me a good Husband, one that feared him. And some troubles being here, many of the people of God went for New England, and among them my Husband desired to go, but I and my friends were very averse unto it. I having one child, and being big with another, thought it to be very difficult to cross the Seas with two small children, some of my Neighbors advising me to the contrary, living so well as I did. But I told them that what the Lord would have me to do, that I would willingly do; and then it pleased the Lord to bring that Scripture to my mind, Eph. 5. 22. *Wives submit yourselves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord.* And then my heart was brought off to a quiet submission.

But after this, I being well delivered, and the Child well; It pleased the Lord soon after to take my Child to himself. Now upon this, so far as it pleased the Lord to help a poor wretch, I begged earnestly of him, to know why he took away my Child, and it was given in to me, that it was because I would not go to *New England*. Upon this the Lord took away all fears from my spirit, and then I told my Husband I was willing to go with him. For the Lord had made my way clear to me against any that should oppose. And then my husband went presently upon the work to fit to go. And the Lord was pleased to carry us as upon Eagles wings, according to that *Deut. 32. 10, 11*. We were eight weeks in our passage, and saw nothing but the Heavens and Waters. I knew that the Lord was a great God upon the shore: But when I was upon the Sea, I did then see more of his glorious power than ever I had done before, according to that of the Psalmist, *Psal. 107. 23, 24*. And when the Lord was pleased to bring us in safety on shore, his people gave us
the

the best entertainment they could, and then I thought I could never be thankful enough to the Lord for his goodness in preserving us upon the Sea, I being big with Child, and my Husband sick almost all the Voyage. After this my Husband would have gone by water higher into the Countrey. But I told him, the Lord having been so good in bringing us safe ashore amongst his people, I was not willing to go again to Sea. And it was a good Providence of God we did not; for most of them that went were undone by it. The first Sermon that I heard after I came ashore was out of *Ier. 2. 13.* *For my people have committed two evils; They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water.* Now the Minister did shew, that whatever we did build on short of Christ, would prove but a broken Cistern, and by that Sermon the Lord was pleased to shake my foundation: but I being a poor ignorant creature, thought if I could but get into the fellowship of the People of God, that that would quiet my spirit, and answer all my Objecti-

ons; And I did accordingly attempt to joyn with the Church, but they were very faithful to the Lord, and my soul, and asked me what Promise the Lord had made home in Power upon me. And I answered them, *Jer. 31. 3. Tea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee.* But they told me that that was a general Promise; that I must look to get some particular Promise made home in Power upon me, and perswaded me to wait a little longer to see what God would further do for my poor soul, which accordingly I did. And going to hear Mr. Cotton, who did preach out of *Rev. 2. 28. To him that overcometh I will give the Morning-star;* from which words he did observe, that that Star was Christ. And this he came to shew, how a soul might know whether it had an interest in Christ or no, and that was by the Lords giving out such precious Promises as these to the poor soul, *viz. That God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and that John 16. 21. And your joy shall no man take from you. And Isa. 54. 21. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy* trans-

transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins : and that
 Isa. 43- 25. which Promises afterwards God
 made sweet to my soul. After this I went
 to hear Mr. *Shepherd*, and he was preach-
 ing out of the Parable of the ten Virgins :
Matth. 25. 1, 13. In his discourse he shewed
 that all were Professors, but the foolish had
 nothing, but Lamps without oyle, a Pro-
 fession without grace in their hearts : but
 that the wise had got grace in their hearts,
 and so were ready prepared to meet the
 Bridegroom when he came. Now, by that
 discourse of his the Lord was pleased to
 convince me that I was a foolish Virgin, and
 that I made a Profession, but wanted the
 oyle of grace in my heart, and by this means
 I was brought into a very sad condition.
 For I did not experimentally know what it
 was to have oyle in my Lamp, grace in my
 heart, nor what it was to have union with
 Christ, that being a mystery to me. And
 then I did think my self guilty of breaking
 all the Commandments of God except the
 sixth. For I thought I had neither desired,
 wished or endeavoured any mans death. But
 then the Lord shewed me, that if I were

saved by Christ, my sins had murdered him, according to that *Acts 3.15. chap. 4. 0.* And that did greatly aggravate my sin the more unto me. Now one of my Neighbors observing that I was in a distressed condition, told me that she had been a hearing, and that the Ministe she heard was a shewing, that the Lord had more glory in the salvation then in the damnation of sinners. For in their salvation, his Mercy and his Justice were both glorified, but in their destruction only his Justice was glorified. Hearing of this, the Lord was pleased to draw out my heart to plead with him. That if he might receive more glory in my salvation then in my destruction, that then his Mercy might be manifested to me. For I thought, although I had many worldly comforts, yet I had no interest in Christ, and that if I should die presently, Hell would be my portion; and in this sad and sore distress, the Lord was pleased to imprint that Scripture upon my mind, *Job 10.2. I will say unto God, do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me? Job 40.2. Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, instruct him? he that*

that reproveth God, let him answer it; and that word of the Apostle, Rom. 9. 20, 21 N. 7. but thou, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour. After this, it pleased God, that Mr. Elliott, and some other of the people of God, seeing me in this sad condition, told me the Church would have me come in to be a Member with them; but I did reply, that all Church-fellowship would do me no good. Then Mr. Elliott asked me, What would do me good? and I told him, Nothing but an interest in Christ. His Answer was, That I was already in the pangs of the New Birth; and he did believe it would not be long before the Lord spoke peace to my poor soul. After that, reading a book of Dr. Prestons, where he did shew, that when the Lord joined himself to a believer, he did first comprehend the soul, and then enabling the soul by faith to apprehend him. Which double Act of faith I then knew not. About fourteen days after, considering what a distressed con-

The Experiences of

dition I was in, I was bemoaning my self before the Lord; and the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my remembrance in *John 16.* *I will give you that joy, that no man taketh from you.*

And then I thought with my self that it was Christ that I did want, and not joy. But the Lord brought that Scripture to me, *that Christ was tidings of great joy, Luke 2. 10, 11.* And I thought how could this be to such a poor wretch as I was, and the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my mind, That he looked not as man looked, *1 Sam. 16. 7.* And that he was God and not man, *Hos. 11. 9.* And by this means he took away all my fears. And then the Lord did help me to discern that this was a mystery indeed, and did so quiet my heart, that all the World seemed as nothing unto me. For I never heard such a voice before, blessed be his Name.

And then the people of God would have me come into fellowship with them, And soon after I was admitted a Babe in Christ among them: Afterwards being

to hear Mr. Cotton, on a Pet 2.2. *As new-born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.* And from thence he shewed, that if it were a living Babe it would cry out for nourishment, and that that soul that did once really taste of Christ was never satisfied, but would still be crying out for more and more of Christ; when such a soul came to any Ordinance, as Hearing, Prayer, the Lords Supper, and did get nothing of Christ, they were all as lost Ordinances to it.

It so fell out, that the next Lords day was the day of sitting down at the Lords Table. And the Lord did put it into my thoughts, that if we received nothing but a piece of bread and a sip of wine, it would be but a poor empty thing, and so the Lord did help me to beg, that if what he had been pleased to speak to my soul before were a true manifestation of himself, that he would be pleased to speak again unto my soul, For a three-fold cord is not easily broken, *Eccles. 4. 12.*

Being at the Ordinance. the bread and wine coming about, I was thus sighing unto the Lord; what shall I have nothing but a bit of bread and a sip of wine this day? And the Lord was pleased to bring that Scripture to my minde, *John 6. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* And so the Lord was pleased to give something more of himself to my poor soul at that time. After this, a sad Providence attended one of my Neighbors, I was full of fears that her condition might be mine. But the Lord brought that Scripture to my mind, *Jer. 29. 11. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of Peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* And thereby the Lord stayd my heart in trusting upon himself, and giving me a safe delivery. And being up again, I went to hear Mr. Cotton, and he was shewing what Assurance was. and how happy that soul was that could say as Job did, *Job 19. 25. And with David Psal. 119. For ever Lord thy Word is settled in the Heavens;* and so the Lord was pleased to shew me what a mercy I had that had Assurance. Then I went to speak to
 Mrs

Mr. Cotton, to ask him what he thought of the work of God upon my poor soul. And he told me, that he was satisfied that it was a real work of God. And he did counsel me to walk humbly and thankfully, and to take heed of grieving that Spirit of God by which I was sealed up to the day of Redemption, and to walk humbly towards those that God had not revealed so much of himself to as he had to me. And then the Lord was pleased by his Providence to call my Husband to come for *England*, and he did tell me, that he should so order business that I should have less of the world to trouble me; I was glad to hear it from him, and desired him to go. And then the Lord was pleased to help me to consider whether I had not got a better Husband; and the Lord did quiet my heart in himself, my soul being espoused to him, 2 Cor. 11. 2. After he was gone from me, we did hear of a War broke forth in *England*, and friends told me my Husband would be in danger of his life if taken. I told them the best I knew, and the worst I knew; and that if God should take my Husband out of the world, I should have

a Husband in Heaven, which was best of all. And Mr. *John Elliott* did visit me in his presence, and asked me how the Lord did bring up my heart in my Husbands absence: And I did tell him, that the Lord was as well able to bring him to me in safety, as he did to carry him out. And he answered me, *I believe the Lord will say unto thee as he did to the Canaanitish woman, Matth. 15. 28. Be it unto thee according to thy faith.* And the Lord was pleased to keep me and all that I had, and to preserve him, and to bring him home in safety unto me. And then in stead of having less of the world which *I* desired, the Lord did cast in more of it. After this, my Husband told me, That he must go again to *England*, and *I* was very unwilling to it; but he told me, if he did not the Name of God would suffer. To prevent which, *I* consented, and it pleased God to bring him home in safety to me. And in a few years after he brought me over to *England*, and God shewed much of his goodness to me.

At my coming ashore he brought that Scripture to my Remembrance *Deut. 33.*

26, 27,

26, 27. *There is none like unto thee, O God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the Heavens in thy Help, and in his Excellency on the sky, the Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting armes.*

After it had pleased God to bring me back to my Native Countrey. I was much troubled that there was no better observation of the Lords day, it being our Practice in New-England to begin it at Sunne-set the Evening before, as it is Recorded in Genesis, *That the Evening and the Morning was the first day* and that Scripture was brought to my Memory, Prov. 14. 10. *The heart knows its own bitterneffe, but no man intermeddles with its joy: Many trials the Lord hath been pleased to exercise me with, but in the midst of all God hath made that Word sweet to my soul, Isa. 54. 18. For the Mountains shall depart and the Hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.*

It pleased the Lord after a year or two to exercise me with much weakness; but then he made that Word sweet unto me, *Iſa 50.8. He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me.* And that word, *Job 15. 11. Are the consolations of God small unto thee?* After these things, when I was in a very great strait, upon the apprehension of some publick dangers that seem'd to threaten us, the Lord was pleased to bring to my mind that Scripture, *Zach. 9. 12. Turn to your strong Holds you Prisoners of Hope.* And since in the midst of my many bodily infirmities God hath made that word sweet to my soul, *Pſal. 116. 7. Return unto thy rest. O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt boontifully with thee.* And that word, *Pſal. 13. 4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me.* I still remain as a prisoner of hope, waiting for a fruition of that happiness which the Lord Jesus Christ hath prepared for me. For I know he that hath the Son hath life. *1 John 5. 12. And if the Son make us free, then are we free indeed, John 8. 36.* And blessed is that people that knows the joyful sound, they shall

shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. I finde the Lord Jesus very free in the tenders of his love to poor sinners. And that love hath in a great measure been manifested to my poor soul. After this it pleased the Lord to visit one of my Daughters with a great sickness, upon which my heart was drawn out to seek the Lord on her behalf, then that Scripture was brought to my mind, *Iohn. 11. 21.* Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died. But I know that now whatever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it to thee. Jesus saith unto her, thy Brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again at the last day. Jesus saith unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life, and he that believes in me shall never die. And it pleased the Lord to give me her life as an Answer of Prayer. It pleased the Lord after this to visit this Land with the Pestilence, a severe stroke of his, that swept away many thousands; and under that sad Providence of his the Lord did help me to rely alone upon himself, from that Scripture, *Psal. 91. 7.* A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy

thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. And according to my faith, it pleased the Lord to preserve both my self and all my Relations from that sad stroke, though some of them were often in the midst of danger, blessed be his Name. The next year after the Lord did again (for our sins) visit us, and that by a dreadful fire, which reduced to ashes many thousand houses, and yet his love was then manifested to me in the preservation of my habitation, when many better than my self were burnt out. Therefore unto my God shall I, (who am less then the least of all his mercies) render that praise which is due unto his Name.

Since that, whilst I was upon a languishing bed, and Death even knocking at the door, it pleased the Lord once again to alarme me in that weak condition by a dreadful fire which brake out very near us, and at that time it pleased my good God to support and strengthen my spirit with that Scripture, *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt*

not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. And that Scripture, *Iſa 54.5 For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole Earth shall be called.* And this second time also the Lord was graciously pleased to preserve me and my House from that amazing stroke which did so much threaten us; And O that all these new and old Experiences might be high obligations upon me and mine to holiness and fruitfulness all our days.

Whilst I remained in *New-England* there hapned a great Earthquake which did shake all in the house, and my son being by me, asked me what it was, I told him, our Neighbours were all amazed at it, and knew not but that the world might then be at an end; and did run up and down very much affrighted at it; but I sat still, and did think with my self what a Christ was worth to my poor soul at that time. And then God made these Scriptures sweet refreshings, supporting and quieting my soul.

Psal. 18.46. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted.

Heb.

Heb. 11. 13. These all died in faith not having received the Promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Rev. 7. 9. After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all Nations, and Kindred, and People, and Tongues, stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes and Palmes in their hands, &c. And he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

FINIS.

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LONDON,

Printed for Ben. Harris at the Stationers
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Exchange in Cornhill, 1676.